

APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

2 ON INVENTION FOR:

3 METHOD OF PROVIDING A CREDIT CARD DRIVEN TUITION INCENTIVE
4 AWARDS PROGRAM

5 BY INVENTOR: Shlomo Nahmias

6 *****

7 Agt. Doc. No.: NAHS10A

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9 RICHARD L. MILLER

10 REGISTERED PATENT AGENT

11 12 PARKSIDE DRIVE

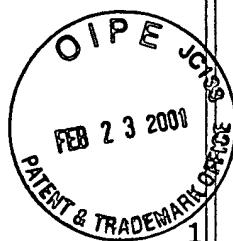
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14 *****

15 TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

16 BE IT KNOWN that I, Shlomo Nahmias,
17 a citizen of THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and resident of:
18 Brooklyn, NY 11230
19 have invented certain new and useful improvements in a(n):
20 METHOD OF PROVIDING A CREDIT CARD DRIVEN TUITION INCENTIVE
21 AWARDS PROGRAM
22 of which the following is a full, clear, concise and exact
23 description:



1 Inventor: Shlomo Nahmias
2 Invention: METHOD OF PROVIDING A CREDIT CARD DRIVEN TUITION INCENTIVE
3 AWARDS PROGRAM
4 DOC. No.: NAHS10A
5 DISK NAME: SPEC002A,2B,C

6 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

7 Field of the Invention:

8 The present invention relates to a method of providing a tuition
9 incentive awards program. More particularly, the present invention relates
10 to a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive awards
11 program.

12 Description of the Prior Art:

13 Numerous innovations for incentive award systems have been provided
14 in the prior art that will be described. Even though these innovations may
15 be suitable for the specific individual purposes to which they address,
16 however, they differ from the present invention.

17 A FIRST EXAMPLE, U.S. Patent No. 5,025,372 to Burton et al. teaches
18 computer data processing, programming and printing for an improved
19 incentive award program which allocates monetary amounts available for
20 expenditure through credit instruments issued to program participants when
21 the participants perform to a designated level of achievement.
22 Participants identifying information and credit instrument account numbers
23 are stored in memory. The incentive program can be divided into multiple
24 time periods. Levels of performance are calculated and assigned for each
25 participant in order for a monetary amount to be available for expenditure
26 through the participant's credit instrument. Monetary amounts can be
27 withheld from the amounts allocated to the instrument accounts.
28 Adjustments can be made in the withheld amounts and in the achievement

DOC. No.: NAHS10A..

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1 lev ls. Calculations, adjustment and reporting concerning amounts
2 allocated for instrument use, withheld amounts, instrument transactions and
3 account balances are made. Calculations and printed invoices for payment
4 by a financial institution to an incentive company based on the credit
5 instruments issued under the incentive program are made and are dependent
6 upon the monetary volume of expenditures through the credit instruments,
7 the total interest income on the credit instruments, and the number of
8 instruments issued. The tradename or trademark of the company sponsoring
9 the program can appear on the physical credit instruments and on statements
10 provided to participants. Travel and merchandise awards are integrated
11 with the credit instrument program.

12 A SECOND EXAMPLE, U.S. Patent No. 5,056,019 to Schultz et al. teaches
13 a marketing method for providing manufacturer purchase reward offers by
14 automatically tracking the purchases of member consumers through the use
15 of bar coded membership cards and using the purchase records in a data
16 processing system to determine if the required purchases have been made to
17 earn a reward. Each member consumer receives a reward booklet disclosing
18 the available reward offers, a periodic status report indicating the member
19 consumer's progress toward earning rewards, and a reward certificate for
20 those rewards earned.

21 A THIRD EXAMPLE, U.S. Patent No. 5,297,026 to Hoffman teaches a
22 system and data processing arrangement for promoting purchases and account
23 activity in a credit card account or other consumer transaction involving
24 sales of goods or services rewards a customer for purchases by providing
25 a high rate of return for funds invested by the customer. A financial
26 institution, general purpose credit card agency, department store,
27 automobile manufacturer, or various other marketers of goods or services
28 agrees to grant the customer a high rate of interest on funds invested with
29 the firm by the customer, provided the customer makes purchases. For
30 purchases made by the customer in a given period (such as one month or six
31 months), the firm gives the customer the right to invest a certain
32 percentage (such as 10%) of the amount of purchases made by the customer

1 in that period. Using automated data processing, the firm calculates the
2 sum of the total purchases made by the customer during the preselected
3 period. Then, funds are accepted from the customer up to the pre-agreed
4 percentage of purchases, and provides a deposit account for the customer,
5 crediting the investment funds in the deposit account. The firm may limit
6 the term during which interest is paid on accepted funds invested for a
7 particular such period, such as a term of six months or one year, or it may
8 simply lower the interest rate at the end of that term.

9 A FOURTH EXAMPLE, U.S. Patent No. 5,983,196 to Wendkos teaches a
10 computer implemented system awards promotional incentives. A participant
11 in the awards system calls or connects to an interactive platform for
12 registering and/or redeeming credits preferably described in uniquely
13 identified certificates. In a telephone environment, the interactive
14 platform is connected to a toll free telephone number where a participant's
15 call is handled by a computer controlled voice response unit. In a
16 computer network environment, a computer user connects to the interactive
17 platform over the network. The participant receives awards credits based
18 on the unique identification of certificates. Award credits for a
19 participant are accumulated in a stored record associated with the
20 participant until redeemed. Award credits can also be acquired as an
21 instant winner based on a random or algorithmic selection of callers to
22 receive such credits. Awards include electronic prizes such as free long
23 distance telephone time, electronic cash and/or service credits.
24 Connection to the interactive platform may occur during execution of an
25 application program such as an electronic game or electronic shopping.

26 A FIFTH EXAMPLE, U.S. Patent No. 5,991,736 to Ferguson et al. teaches
27 a patronage incentive system in which a monetary award is made to a
28 customer's retirement account as incentive for the customer to participate
29 in a transaction with the sponsor for the sponsor's goods or services. The
30 system includes a means for identifying the customer, a means for inputting
31 the identification information and other information about the transaction
32 into a computer data storage, a computer data processing device which uses

1 a software program along with the transactional information to calculate
2 an incentive award amount a means for transferring the monetary funds equal
3 to the incentive award amount from an incentive award pool to th
4 customer's retirement account, and a means of reporting the incentive award
5 amount to the customer and to the sponsor. Embodiments of a method of
6 conducting a patronage incentive system of the present invention are also
7 disclosed comprising the steps of inputting transactional information into
8 a computer data storage device, calculating the incentive award amount
9 through the use of a computer data processing device, transferring monetary
10 funds equal to the incentive award amount from an incentive award pool to
11 the customer's retirement account, and reporting the incentive award amount
12 to the customer and to the sponsor.

13 It is apparent that numerous innovations for incentive award systems
14 have been provided in the prior art that are adapted to be used.
15 Furthermore, even though these innovations may be suitable for the specific
16 individual purposes to which they address, however, they would not be
17 suitable for the purposes of the present invention as heretofore described.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

ACCORDINGLY, AN OBJECT of the present invention is to provide a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive awards program that avoids the disadvantages of the prior art.

ANOTHER OBJECT of the present invention is to provide a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive awards program that is simple and inexpensive to manufacture.

STILL ANOTHER OBJECT of the present invention is to provide a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive awards program that is simple to use.

BRIEFLY STATED, YET ANOTHER OBJECT of the present invention is to provide a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive awards program wherein a program vendor teams up with a credit card issuer who gives the program vendor a certain percentage of the sales made by a member card holder. The program vendor than appropriates a certain percentage of this amount and forwards it to the card holder for participating in the tuition incentive awards program.

The novel features which are considered characteristic of the present invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, both as to its construction and its method of operation, together with additional objects and advantages thereof, will be best understood from the following description of the specific embodiments when read and understood in connection with the accompanying drawing.

1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

2 The figures of the drawing are briefly described as follows:

3 FIGURES 1A-1UU are a flow chart of the present invention.

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LIST OF REFERENCE NUMERALS UTILIZED IN THE DRAWING

- 2 10 credit card driven tuition incentive awards program of present
3 invention
4 12 agreement between credit card issuer 14 and program vendor 16
5 14 credit card issuer
6 16 program vendor
7 18 percentage of credit card sales
8 20 predetermined period
9 22 FDIC insured bank accounts
10 24 set interest collecting on FDIC insured bank accounts 22
11 26 cost of operations of program vendor 16
12 28 potential credit card holder
13 30 credit card
14 32 credit card holder
15 34 annual fee for credit card holder to participate in credit card
16 driven tuition incentive awards program 10
17 36 account of credit card holder 32
18 38 balance of account 36 of credit card holder 32
19 40 account balance of account 36 of credit card holder 32
20 42 amount
21 43 amount charged on credit card 30
22 44 certain percentage 44 of amount charged 42 on credit card 30
23 46 points
24 48 points accumulated
25 50 telephone
26 52 Internet
27 54 predetermined amount of points accumulated 48
28 56 dollars
29 58 dollar amount
30 60 check in dollar amount 58
31 62 student

1 64 name of student 62
2 66 school attended by student 62
3 68 tuition of school 66 attended by student 62
4 70 problem getting check 60 to school 66
5 72 distinct code number of each school 62
6 74 confirmation
7 76 mail confirmation
8 78 e-mail confirmation
9 80 call
10 82 automated telephone call
11 84 Internet call

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1 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

2 Referring now to figures 1A-1UU, the method of providing a
3 credit card driven tuition incentive awards program of the present
4 invention is shown generally at 10 and comprises the following steps.

5 STEP 1: Pay out, by a credit card issuer 14, as per an agreement 12
6 between the credit card issuer 14 and a program vendor 16, a
7 percentage of credit card sales 18 at a predetermined period
8 20, to the program vendor 16, wherein the predetermined period
9 20 is one of monthly and quarterly.

10 STEP 2: Place, by at least one of the credit card issuer 14 and the
11 program vendor 16, the percentage of credit card sales 18 in
12 insured bank accounts 22 collecting set interest 24.

13 STEP 3: Keep optionally, by the at least one of the program vendor 16
14 and the credit card issuer 14, the set interest 24 for cost of
15 operations 26.

16 STEP 4: Apply, by a potential credit card holder 28, for a credit card
17 30, to the credit card issuer 14.

18 STEP 5: Determine, by the credit card issuer 14, if the potential
19 credit card holder 28 qualifies for the credit card 30.

20 STEP 6: Abort, if answer to STEP 5 is no.

21 STEP 7: Issue, by the credit card issuer 14, the credit card 30, to
22 the potential credit card holder 28 so as to form a credit
23 card hold r 32, if answer to STEP 5 is yes, and as a result
24 thereof, the credit card hold r 32 automatically is approved

1 for the credit card driven tuition incentive award program 10,
2 by virtue of affiliation of the credit card driven tuition
3 incentive award program 10 and the credit card issuer 14 with
4 each other.

5 STEP 8: Pay, by the credit card holder 32, an annual fee 34, to at
6 least one of the credit card issuer 14 and the program vendor
7 16 so as to form an account 36 with a balance 38 so as to form
8 an account balance 40, if STEP 7 is carried out, wherein the
9 annual fee 34 is predetermined.

10 STEP 9: Charge, by the credit card holder 32, an amount 42 on the
11 credit card 30 so as to form an amount charged 43, if STEP 8
12 is carried out.

13 STEP 10: Accumulate, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and
14 the credit card issuer 14, a certain percentage 44 of the
15 amount charged 42 on the credit card 30, by the credit card
16 holder 32, if STEP 9 is carried out.

17 STEP 11: Convert, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
18 credit card issuer 14, the certain percentage 44 to points 46
19 so as to form points accumulated 48, if STEP 10 is carried
20 out.

21 STEP 12: Check, by the credit card holder 32, the account balance 40,
22 by one of telephone 50 and Internet 52, if STEP 11 is carried
23 out.

24 STEP 13: Determine, by the credit card holder 32, if the points
25 accumulated 48 are to be redeemed when the points accumulated
26 48 reach a predetermined amount 54.

- 1 STEP 14: Determine if the points accumulated 48 has reached the
2 predetermined amount 54, if answer to STEP 13 is yes.
- 3 STEP 15: Return to STEP 9, if answer to STEP 14 is no.
- 4 STEP 16: Convert, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
5 credit card issuer 14, the points accumulated 48 to dollars 56
6 so as to form a dollar amount 58, if answer to STEP 14 is yes.
- 7 STEP 17: Issue, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
8 credit card issuer 14, a check 60 in the dollar amount 58, if
9 STEP 16 is carried out.
- 10 STEP 18: Determine if the credit card holder 32 is not a student 62 who
11 has a name 64 and who attends a school 66 with a tuition 68,
12 if STEP 17 is carried out.
- 13 STEP 19: Proceed to STEP 21, if answer to STEP 18 is no.
- 14 STEP 20: Put, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
15 credit card issuer 14, the name 64 of the student 62 on the
16 check 60, if answer to STEP 18 is yes.
- 17 STEP 21: Determine if there is a problem 70 getting the check 60 to the
18 school 66.
- 19 STEP 22: Send, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
20 credit card issuer 14, the check 60 directly to the credit
21 card holder 32, if answer to STEP 21 is yes.
- 22 STEP 23: Forward, by the credit card holder 32, the check 60 to the
23 school 66, if STEP 22 is carried out.

- 1 STEP 24: Send, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
2 credit card issuer 14, the check 60 directly to the school 66,
3 wherein each school 66 receives a distinct code number 72, if
4 the answer to STEP 21 is no.
- 5 STEP 25: Confirm, by the at least one of the program vendor 16 and the
6 credit card issuer 14, to the credit card holder 32, that the
7 check 60 has been sent out so as to form a confirmation 74,
8 wherein the confirmation 74 is by one of mail 76, e-mail 78,
9 and the telephone 50, if STEP 24 is carried out.
- 10 STEP 26: Credit, by the school 66, the check 60 towards the tuition 68
11 of the student 62.
- 12 STEP 27: Call, by the credit card holder 32, the at least one of the
13 program vendor 16 and the credit card issuer 14 so as to form
14 a call 80, wherein the call 80 is by one of automated
15 telephone 82 and the Internet 84, if answer to STEP 13 is no.
- 16 STEP 28: Determine if the call 80 is made within a predetermined time ,
17 if STEP 27 is carried out.
- 18 STEP 29: Request, by the credit card holder 32, redemption of the
19 points accumulated 48, from the at least one of the program
20 vendor 16 and the credit card issuer 14, if answer to STEP 28
21 is yes.
- 22 STEP 30: Return to STEP 24, if STEP 29 is carried out.
- 23 STEP 31: Forfeit automatically, the points accumulated 48, to the at
24 least one of the program vendor 16 and the credit card issuer
25 14, if answer to STEP 28 is no.

1 It will be understood that each of the elements described
2 above, or two or more together, may also find a useful application in other
3 types of constructions differing from the types described above.

4 While the invention has been illustrated and described as
5 embodied in a method of providing a credit card driven tuition incentive
6 awards program, however, it is not limited to the details shown, since it
7 will be understood that various omissions, modifications, substitutions and
8 changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and its
9 operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing in any
10 way from the spirit of the present invention.

11 Without further analysis, the foregoing will so fully reveal
12 the gist of the present invention that others can, by applying current
13 knowledge, readily adapt it for various applications without omitting
14 features that, from the standpoint of prior art, fairly constitute
15 characteristics of the generic or specific aspects of this invention.